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California Stem Cell Agency Receives 27 Letters of Intent for First Grants Program

EMERYVILLE, CA — In response to its first request for application (RFA), the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM) today announced receipt of 27 letters of intent for applications for the CIRM Training Program, only two weeks after its formal announcement was posted. The CIRM Training Program will fund stem cell research training for pre-doctoral students, post-doctoral fellows and clinical fellows enrolled in California's universities, and non-profit academic and research institutions.

"We are delighted at the robust response to our first call for grants. California's next generation of scientists and clinicians is clearly eager to begin training for stem cell research and the development of new therapies for disease," said Zach Hall, Ph.D., CIRM's interim president. "These grants will create a vital foundation for future stem cell research in California."

The CIRM Training Program encourages institutions to create programs in which basic and clinical scientists are trained together in order to promote the flow of information from the laboratory to the clinic. Institutions are also required to offer a course in the social, legal and ethical implications of stem cell research as part of their curricula.

The RFA was posted on May 16 and letters of intent were due June 1. Complete applications for the grants must be received by July 1, 2005. The Grants Working Group is expected to review the CIRM Training Grants applications in August with recommendations to come before the Independent Citizens' Oversight Committee for funding at the September or October meeting.

The CIRM aims to commit approximately \$45 million over the next three years to this Training Program, with awards to approximately 18 institutions for as many as 200 CIRM Scholars at any given time.

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